

MARLOWE'S READING CORNER

A free resource guide for children and their parents
In loving memory of Christina Bain

MOTHER'S DAY 2021
BY PALE HEARSE





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Marlowe's Reading Corner

From Pale Hearse - Tus Amigas Hasta El Fin. Your Friends 'Til the End



Resource List

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Mother's Day 2021

This custom resource list was created in honor of our friend, Christina Bain, her husband Wes, and their inspiring daughter, Marlowe. Christina believed traditions keep memories alive and help with the grieving process. With her blessing, we will continue to recommend a new book a month, like the ones they used for their weekly 'Family Book Club' and promise to do our part to continue the conversation about grief.

Books, like lives, come in all shapes, sizes, colors, and timeframes. They come from all around the world and are filled with stories in a variety of languages. As Mason Cooley wrote "Reading gives us someplace to go when we have to stay where we are."

While we do encourage support for the authors by purchasing their materials, we do also suggest trying local libraries, as they are also a wonderful and free community resource.

As always, if you ever have any questions or need help again, we'll be here with you until the end.

-Allie García & Alex Casas
Pale Hearse Co-Founders

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Recommended Readers Guide



PICTURE BOOKS -
YOUNGER KIDS
(TODDLER TO GRADE SCHOOL)

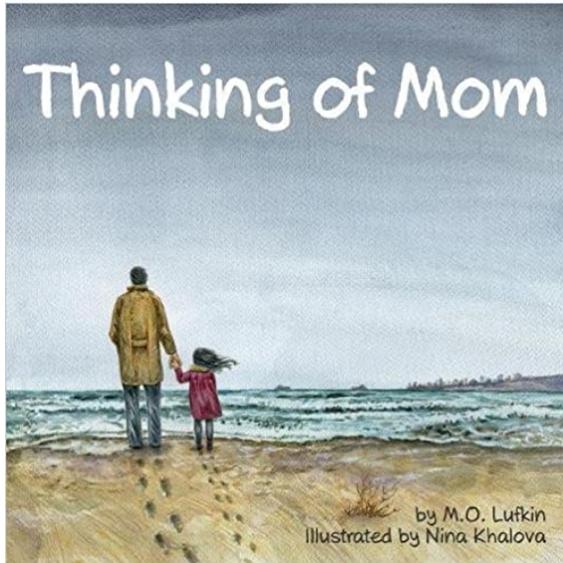


CHAPTER BOOKS -
RECOMMENDED FOR TWEENS
(8-12)



TEENS

Recommended Reading Materials & Activities



Mom takes care of Ella every day. She helps her brush her teeth and get dressed, and takes her outside to play. But when Mom is overcome with illness, Ella is left feeling sad, angry, and helpless. She doesn't know how to deal with those emotions, but Dad helps her to call on the good memories of Mom to find happiness again.

- This story captures the poignant emotions of a little girl dealing with the loss of her mother. A great book for parents, caregivers, teachers, therapists, grief and death workers to keep in their resources.

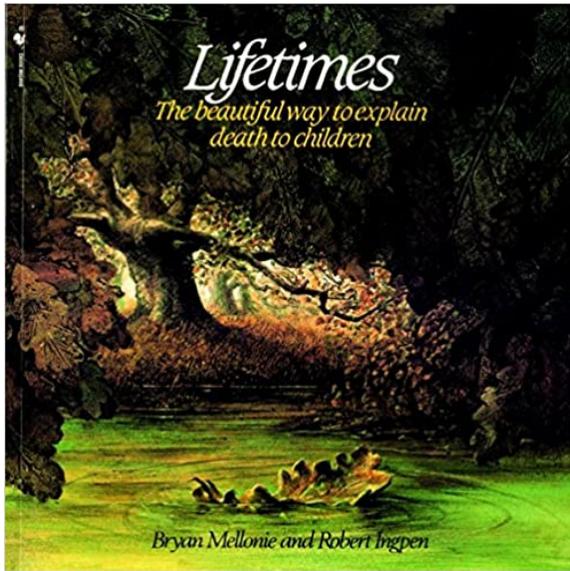
Interactive Activity Suggestion:

The watercolor paintings in the book help reader's connect easily with Ella's pain and sadness. Using watercolor or any art form to release feelings and emotions can be beneficial for both children and adults. The creative process encourages movement of the imagination that we may struggle with during our grieving process. There are no rules or instructions, simply use what you have available to draw, paint, write, or find other unique ways to get creative.

Need help getting them started? Draw an outline of a body and ask them to color or draw in the areas that they are feeling their grief the most.

Helpful Conversation Starters:

- ★ Think about which colors best represent your feelings?
- ★ How does your paint stroke vary with your body's current state? Are you tense? Where do you feel it?
- ★ What are things you can do to remember them by? Continue a tradition?



Lifetimes explains life and death in a sensitive, caring, and beautiful way. Lifetimes tells us about beginnings. And about endings. And about living in between. With large, wonderful illustrations, it tells about plants. About animals. About people. It tells that dying is as much a part of living as being born. It helps us to remember and better understand.

- This book helps young readers to understand that a shorter life isn't necessarily worse than a longer life, just....different, as all lives are. It helps tie in death to the cycles of life to also help adults explain death with facts and allow children to understand through familiar examples such as the cycle of a butterfly.

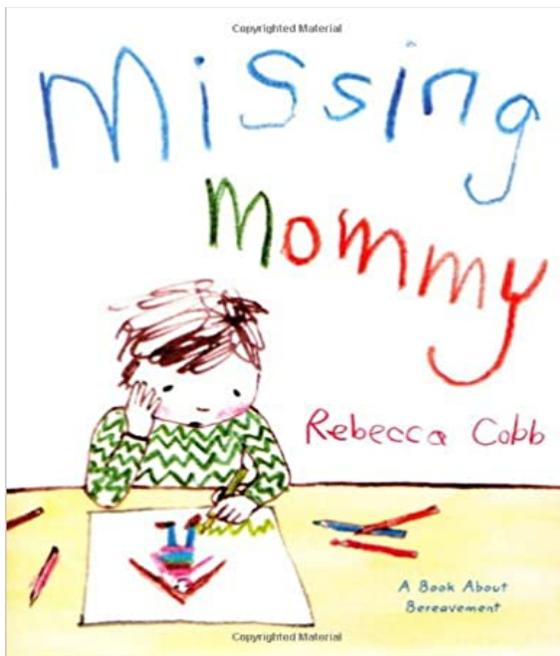
Interactive Activity Suggestion:

Gardening is an activity that the whole family can participate in and a great way to learn about a variety of life cycles. You can grow a variety of flowers, plants, fruits, or veggies. Many of which will attract a variety of insects to continue to learn from. Our backyards, parks, and trails hold so many opportunities to talk about the life cycles around us. Take a walk, maybe play 'I spy' and see what you can find together.

Follow the [link](#) for a guide on how to grow seedlings from a cardboard egg carton.

Helpful Conversation Starters:

- ★ What lessons did our loved ones teach us while they were here? What lessons do the rest of the world need to hear? What are the things we are going to miss most about them?
- ★ Have them finish the feeling sentence, ex: "What I worry about sometimes is..."
"What I feel most sad about right now is..."
- ★ Validating feelings is always helpful. Things like "It's okay to feel how you feel right now. Angry, sad, lonely, confused..."



Some time ago, we said good-bye to Mommy. I am not sure where she has gone.

Honest and straightforward, this touching story explores the many emotions a bereaved child may experience, from anger and guilt to sadness and bewilderment. Ultimately, Missing Mommy focuses on the positive—the recognition that the child is not alone but still part of a family that loves and supports him.

- This book tackles the excruciatingly difficult subject of young children who have lost a parent. There is no adult voice dispensing advice here, only the writing and drawings of the grieving child himself with the boy simply stating his feelings throughout. A great way to help kids vocalize their feelings and questions about loss.

Interactive Activity Suggestion:

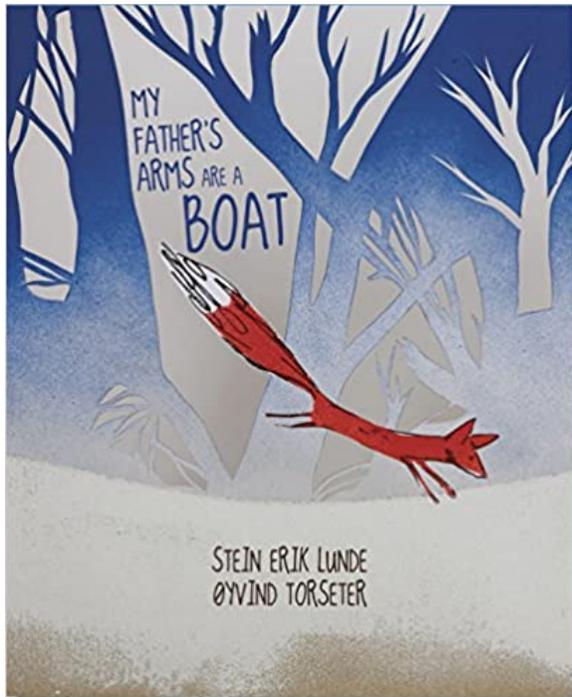
A feelings mask can help to better understand some of the feelings associated with grief. The idea behind this activity is to draw or write what represents you on the inside and outside.

- ★ The outside of the mask represents what we show the world. This can be what you look like, facial expressions, feelings, or interests/hobbies (plays sports, enjoys school band, sings in the choir, likes Country-Western music, etc.)
- ★ The inside of the mask represents what you feel inside that you may not show others. This could be words or colors (alone, wounded, sad, angry/red, devastated, sad/blue, no friends, isolated etc.)

Materials needed: paper plate, regular paper, this [mask template](#), or whatever other canvas you have available to use as a mask. Try markers, pens, paint, etc.

Helpful Conversation Starters:

- ★ Why do you think you keep some feelings more hidden?
- ★ Do you feel more comfortable showing some people what you have on the inside of your mask over other people?
- ★ What qualities on the inside of the mask would you like to one day show others?



It's quieter than it's ever been. Unable to sleep, a young boy climbs into his father's arms. Feeling the warmth and closeness of his father, he begins to ask questions about the birds, the foxes, and whether his mom will ever wake up. They go outside under the starry sky. Loss and love are as present as the white spruces, while the father's clear answers and assurances calm his worried son. Here we feel the cycles of life and life's continuity, even in the face of absence and loss, so strongly and clearly that we know at the end that everything will, somehow, be alright.

- This book is comforting and profound. You can feel the father's love and emotions. Appropriate for young children and helpful for parents, caregivers, educators, and therapists. It is filled with metaphors and opportunities for further discussions.

Interactive Activity Suggestion:

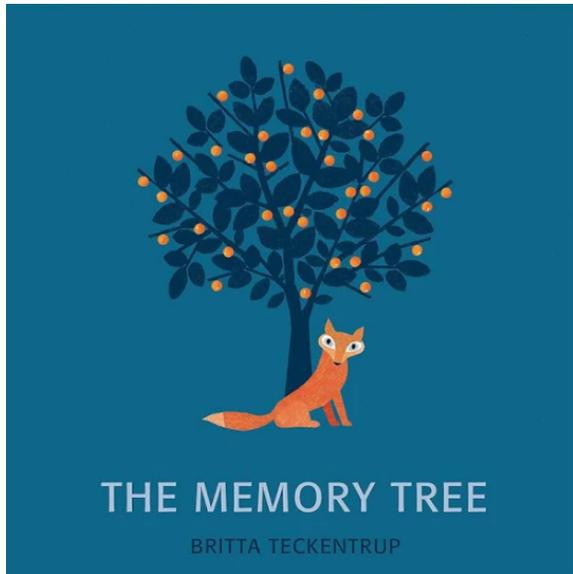
Many believe animals are portents from the spirit world or represent a message. For instance, ladybugs are said to be a good omen, offering assurance that not all is lost. Butterflies and birds, especially cardinals and blue jays, have long been seen as messengers that a departed loved one is still watching over you.

Making a bird feeder at home can be simple to do with most ingredients coming directly from your pantry. Here are a few [ideas](#) to help you get started.

Bird watching in itself can be a calming and insightful experience.

Helpful Conversation Starters:

- ★ Discussing the symbolism behind certain birds like cardinals and how those birds can represent our loved ones. Then ask them "What do you believe?"
- ★ Ask "How does the story make you feel" and let them tell you and ask you questions.
- ★ Sharing stories about your own life can be comforting. Share stories about times that you were afraid, sad or angry. Tell them about how you dealt with those situations and what you learned from them.



Fox has lived a long and happy life in the forest, but now he is tired. He lies down in his favourite clearing, and falls asleep forever. Before long, Fox's friends begin to gather in the clearing. One by one, they tell stories of the special moments that they shared with Fox. And so, as they share their memories, a tree begins to grow, becoming bigger and stronger with each memory, sheltering and protecting all the animals in the forest, just as Fox did when he was alive.

- This gentle story about the loss of a loved one, can bring comfort to both children and parents and can facilitate conversations about the feelings associated with the memories left behind by those we love.

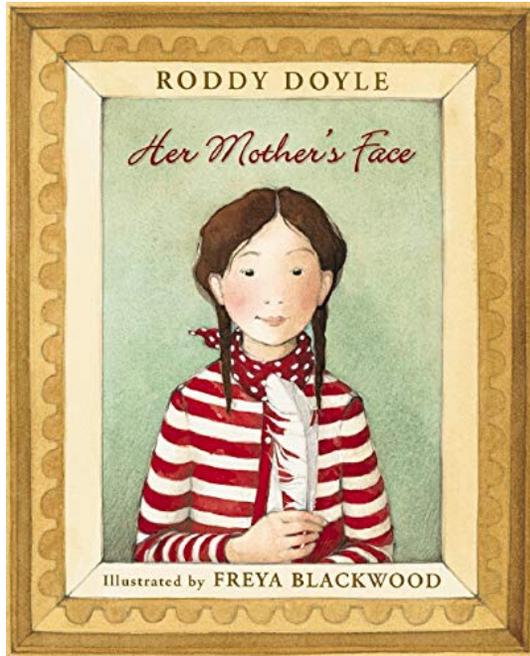
Interactive Activity Suggestion:

Start your own memory tree/box/jar. This can be easily done by using paper or materials around the house like an old can, box, or jar, then writing down or drawing your favorite memories to add. Materials that remind you of those memories can be added too. Consider this like a time capsule of memories.

One of our favorite memory remembrance ideas, something Christina herself did as a seamstress, is to create a quilt with handpicked fabric to give to her loved ones so they could wrap themselves and feel her with them. For more ideas on this check out the [article](#) on Seamwork written by Christina about healing through making. “What to Make When You’re Dying.”

Helpful Conversation Starters:

- ★ Ask about the little things that they loved most about their loved one. Share the things you loved most.
- ★ Share stories that really capture your loved ones personality. Do they have any fond memories or traits they remember about them?
- ★ Discuss what lessons you each learned from them, what lessons the rest of the world should know about.



When Siobhan was just three years old, her mother died, leaving Siobhan and her father alone in their house in Dublin. They never talk about her, and now, at ten years old, Siobhan no longer remembers her mother's face.

One day, Siobhan meets a mysterious woman in the park who tells her that to remember her mother, she just needs to look in a mirror. As Siobhan grows older, she sees more and more of her mother's face in her own reflection. With time, she and her father and her own daughter are able to remember Siobhan's mother with joy and laughter instead of tears.

- A tender tale for those who have lost a parent. This book adds a hopeful, soothing message that life goes on, and so can individuals.

Interactive Activity Suggestion:

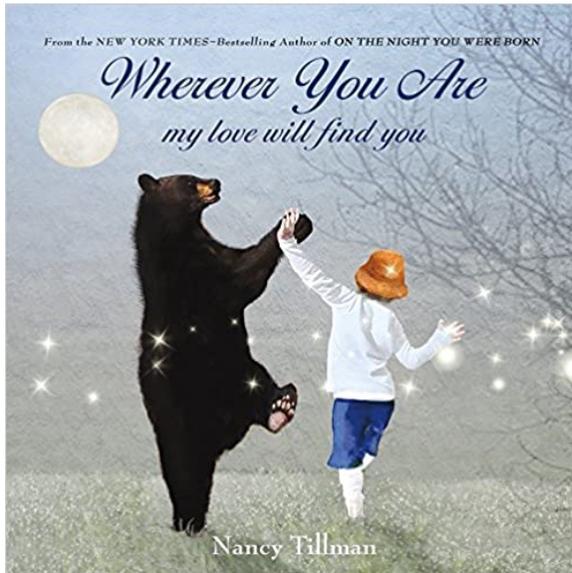
Asking family & friends for old photographs of your loved one can be a really fun way to share stories. After you've collected some photographs (and made copies), you can build a custom collage, perhaps even include photos of you at that age. Don't be afraid to get creative.

Helpful Conversation Starters:

- ★ Sharing stories about your loved one and encouraging your child to share his or her story about them. Let them ask you questions and answer their questions as best as you can. Do not be afraid to say, "I don't know."
- ★ If the death was a result of a tragic event, discuss this with your child in a simple, direct and age appropriate manner. Be honest and share clear, accurate information about what happened. Children need to hear the truth from someone they love. Let them share what they remember too.
- ★ Rituals can give your family tangible ways to acknowledge your grief and honor the memory of those who have died. Lighting candles, recognizing special occasions, making new traditions in their honor or even volunteering with a local charity, that they loved, are some of the ways you can incorporate new traditions or rituals.

Mother's Day Special:

Last on our list, although not directly associated with death, this book is a sweet reminder of the unconditional love our mother's have for us. Definitely a must have for your family's library to read over and over.



*. . . I wanted you more than you'll ever know,
so I sent love to follow wherever you go. . . .*

Love is the greatest gift we have to give our children. It's the one thing they can carry with them each and every day.

If love could take shape it might look something like these heartfelt words and images from the inimitable Nancy Tillman. Wherever You Are is a book to share with your loved ones, no matter how near or far, young or old, they are.

- The simplicity of the illustrations work well with the verses that describe the power of love and how it is always near no matter where one is. Never doubt that you're number one with Mom.

Other Resources

- ★ [Wonders & Worries](#) ensures that children and teenagers can reach their full potential, despite a parent's serious illness.
- ★ [The Livestrong Cancer Institutes](#) of the Dell Medical School have a simple yet powerful mission: to rethink the full range of cancer care, from prevention to diagnosis, treatment, survivorship and end-of-life care – all with a focus on the patient's needs, values and preferences.
- ★ [Reimaging Grief](#) with Lisa Keefauver, MSW. Helping you find language when you are at a loss for words. Individual & group grief support, guided meditation, and workshops. Find the Grief is a Sneaky B!tch Episode with Christina Bain, [here](#).



Death may separate us but love makes the journey.

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